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NEW ESSAYS

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WILSON vs. ROOSEVELT: REFLECTIONS ON A CHARTER

In the past year, two schools of thought have crystallized within the American bourgeoisie on the question of America's part in the post-war world. They agree on what is, after all, the main point: that this country is the most democratic and the most prosperous and generally the most wonderful nation that has yet arisen on the face of the globe, and therefore is divinely appointed to dominate the post-war world. Their disagreement is sharp, however, on the form this dominance should take.

The liberals, whose ideologists are Vice-President Wallace and Wendell Willkie, envision the United States leading the rest of the world into a paradise of Democracy, Free Speech, International Brotherhood, and Planned Abundance in which every individual — black, yellow, brown, or white — will have delivered on his doorstep every morning one quart of Grade A milk provided gratis by the Henry A. Wallace International Milk Supply Corp. The basic assumption of this school is that bourgeois democracy has a future, that the historical movement which began, in 1789 will rise to a higher and more universal plane once Nazism has been defeated by the United Nations.

The conservatives reject this perspective as unrealistic, but are unable to substitute any ideology of their own for it, since it is as yet too early to come out openly with authoritarian ideas. They are forced therefore to get along without any ideology at all, limiting their aspirations for the moment to the re-establishment of the *status quo ante Hitler*, with the important difference that America is to intervene positively to control the new world balance-of-power in her favor. The Army, the State Department, and certain sections of big business are committed to this view.

In this conflict, the liberals have won all the oratorical battles, and the conservatives have won all the policy decisions. In England, Churchill has come out with increasing boldness for the preservation of British rule over India, and Cripps — only recently the white hope of the liberals — has been excluded from the war cabinet. The U. S. Secretary of War has just recognized as recruiting agent for the Army . . . Otto von Hapsburg. President Roosevelt himself, who in 1940 and 1941 was thrilling the liberals with speeches about the Four Freedoms, last spring gave an official name to the war: "The War for Survival". The war-policy speech to which he gave his approval last summer was not Wallace's "People's Century" oration, but Hull's conservative rebuttal of Wallace. On the most important political issue in the war to date, the Indian question, he has backed up Churchill.

The cruellest blow of all to liberal illusions has turned out to be the American occupation of French Africa. How delighted and relieved were the liberal supporters of the war for the first 48 hours, at this undeniably brilliant strategic stroke, carried out with the utmost technical efficiency and the most effective military "fifth column" work in advance. But this greatest triumph of Anglo-American arms in the war to date has turned out to be politically disillusioning in the extreme. General Eisenhower's political manifestoes were issued not to the native populations, but to the Vichy French imperialists. The American army landed not to bring the Four Freedoms or the Atlantic Charter to Algeria and Morocco, but to preserve the French Empire. As the *N. Y. Times* prophetically editorialized on October 25 last, "The only hope for a French Empire after the present war rests with a victory of the United Nations." Nor was this all. These French African leaders are not "good" (i. e., pro-United-Nations) reactionaries like De Gaulle, but "bad" (pro-Nazi) ones; and yet General Eisenhower made a deal with the late Darlan and with Nogues which left them in command in Africa. Two questions arise: why did Eisenhower make the deal? and: why did Darlan make the deal? The answer to either is discouraging to those who believe that a victory of the United Nations in this war will lead to a broadening of the classic bourgeois-democratic social and political ideals.

The disillusionment which the liberals are now undergoing is something they should have been long prepared for (only in that case, they would not be liberals). There is not only no prospect of carrying the ideas of 1789 to a fuller fruition under democratic capitalism, but there is little hope of repeating even the extremely modest restoration of these ideals that took place after the last war. The promulgation of the Atlantic Charter in the fall of 1941, the only official statement of war aims which the present governments of England and America have ever committed themselves to, should have indicated clearly the real nature of the war now being conducted by the Roosevelt and Churchill regimes. But the liberals, trying to believe in

the possibility of democratic social progress without any revolutionary reordering of society, have to shut their eyes to the real nature of anything that even seems to be on their side. Thus Wallace in the same speech calls for the carrying out to their historical conclusion of the democratic and humanitarian ideals of the Great French Revolution, and cites as an example of democratic progress . . . the Soviet Union. And so, too, no liberal speech, whether by Wallace or Cripps or Willkie, is complete without a friendly reference to the Atlantic Charter. The chief quarrel the liberals have with the Charter is that it is not being implemented — as when Willkie recently demanded a "Pacific Charter" to bring freedom to Asia. Actually, however, the Charter itself is worth some analysis as a symbol of the conservative, not to say reactionary, nature of the Roosevelt-Churchill war.

This appears with special clarity if one compares the Charter with its historical analogue (and inspiration), Woodrow Wilson's "Fourteen Points". If Wilson's proposals, in the light of what happened later, are tragedy, the Charter carries out Marx's formula about history repeating itself as farce. The Fourteen Points was a great historical document, expressing the last grandiose illusion of bourgeois idealism. The Charter is — at first glance — a restatement of the Wilsonian concepts: free trade, disarmament, self-determination of nations, freedom of the seas. In 1918 the bourgeois-democratic system was still viable enough for people, including Wilson himself, to believe in such war aims. And in fact there *was* a temporary stabilization of capitalism after the last war, a host of small nations *were* more or less self-determined, a League of Nations *was* formed. But the bloom was off such doctrines long before 1941, and to propose them as a basis for post-war reconstruction today is a bad comedy.

They are put forward in the Charter, furthermore, with such qualifications and such intentional vagueness as to rob them of whatever positive attraction they might still retain.¹⁾ This vagueness is necessary because Roosevelt and Churchill have in mind a very different kind of post-war world than Wilson did, and one whose outlines would not sound particularly well in public.

The real clue to the Charter is to be found not in its similarities to the Fourteen Points, but in its departure therefrom. The similarities betray the ideological bankruptcy of the present democratic regimes, but the departures hint at the real direction their post-war plans are taking. Five of them are especially significant:

1) It is not surprising that the Charter should have been a dismal failure as propaganda. The loyal *N. Y. TIMES*, it is true, saluted it with a rising-to-the-occasion editorial beginning: "The great winds of history blew the two grey ships together in the shadowy lanes of the North Atlantic." But the more realistic *TIME* (whose account began in equally characteristic fashion: "In the damp, disused musty wharf shed the 50 men stood and sat, impatient, griped, chilled.") admitted that whereas "the Fourteen Points became the greatest victory of the war", the Charter was "a disappointment" and sounded "warmed over".

1) The Charter omits Wilson's famous First Point: "open covenants openly arrived at", its authors probably not having the heart for such an idealistic flight in this age.

2) The pronouncement in favor of free trade is hedged by the phrase, "with due regard for their existing obligations", which is reported to have been inserted at the insistence of the British cabinet, doubtless mindful of tin and rubber cartels and the Ottawa "Empire Free Trade" Agreement. It would seem, in any case, that Free Trade has acquired connotations unknown to Bright and Cobden, since the Soviet Union, in signing the Lend-Lease Agreement, has pledged itself to work towards "the elimination of all forms of discriminatory treatment in international commerce, and to the reduction of tariffs and other trade barriers" after the war. Hull's miracle of integrating into a post-war Free Trade world a nation whose foreign trade has been a monopoly since 1917 is of the same order as Wallace's transformation of Stalinist Russia into a democracy. In a period like this, such terms are to be understood in a Pickwickian sense.

3) Unlike Wilson's Fourth Point, the disarmament proposal of the Charter is unilateral, applying only to "nations which threaten aggression". The major effect of Wilson's Fourteen Points was on the enemy population — "the greatest victory of the war". The Charter was as ineffectual in this important purpose of stating war aims as all the other democratic propaganda has been. Many papers in Germany, indeed, are said to have used the Charter as *pro-war* propaganda by simply printing its full text without comment, putting the disarmament proposals in bold-faced type.

4) No less than eight of Wilson's points were devoted to detailed proposals for specific nations — Point Seven deals with Belgium, Point Twelve with Turkey, etc. It was this which, as much as anything, made it a meaningful and effective political document. Although the Charter endorses in principle self-determination of nations and the restoration of sovereign rights "to those who have been forcibly deprived of them", it betrays its unreality in not venturing a single specific proposal. The two democracies have officially recognized the various governments-in-exile as the most expedient course at the moment, but they are wary of making definite commitments. For the Nazi occupation has destroyed most of the institutions, property rights, political parties and social differentiations on which these old regimes based themselves. (And most of them were politically bankrupt anyway when they fled before the Nazis.) Roosevelt and Churchill are not anxious to commit themselves to quixotic forays on behalf of "legitimacy". What regime they will try to install in each country will depend on a delicate balance between two considerations: (1) its subservience to Anglo-American interests; (2) its popularity inside the nation in question. The contradiction that plagues Hitler's New Order now will probably vex the democratic statesmen after their victory: to the extent that (1) obtains, (2) will be lacking, and vice versa. The Nazi conquest

of Europe has, furthermore, so shattered the old national barriers to a continental economy that even a Wilson might hesitate to recreate them today.

5) Wilson's Fourteenth Point proposed a formation of "a general association of nations" after the war, but the Charter says nothing about either a new league of nations or a "United States of Europe".

When this silence is added to the other differences already noted, two general patterns emerge from the documents: the Wilsonian vision of the nations of the world, each of them, big and small, preserving its sovereignty as an absolute right, all participating democratically in a league of nations (much as every citizen, rich or poor, preserves his rights as an individual under parliamentary democracy); and, on the other hand, the drive towards the integration of the world into a few big continental areas nakedly and directly dominated by three or four great powers, each with its 'hinterland' of weaker nations (the political parallel here needs no definition). It is true that the big powers converted the League of Nations into an instrumentality for maintaining their ascendancy over the weaker nations, just as inviolable civil rights don't prevent the poor citizen from being exploited by the rich under bourgeois democracy. But there is quite a difference, nonetheless, between indirect and direct, veiled and naked exploitation.

Finally there is a significant difference in *tone* between the two documents. Wilson put forward his as an individual, not even as President of the United States, (though his official position naturally lent weight to his proposals). The Charter is explicitly an official statement of the "national policies" of two great empires; and the world settlement proposed is to be put into effect, not by cooperative action of all nations, but unilaterally, by England and America, — "They desire... They respect.... They will endeavor". Wilson treated lesser nations as subjects, the Charter treats them as objects.

There are three factors which may upset America's neo-imperialist plans as expressed in the Atlantic Charter: 1) England's economic situation; 2) Stalin's European policy; 3) what happens in Europe when the Nazi lid is blown off.

1) The American post-war planners have cast England in the role of junior partner to this country, nor are there lacking British voices already in support. But a junior partner must follow the senior's lead, and this may be difficult. Great Britain will emerge from the war stripped of most of her overseas investments, with her former lucrative hegemony of world trade services (shipping, banking, insurance) transferred to New York. She will thus have lost most of the capital imports she needs to balance her huge food and raw material imports, while her home industry, concentrated by the war into big and technologically efficient units, will be more productive than ever. This situation, similar to Germany's in the thirties, may lead to a similar neo-mercantilist "export or die" policy, with State

control of trade, barter, and Empire autarchy. "Britain must resort to the barter system after the war," stated the Federation of British Industries recently, "buying only from nations prepared to buy British services and products, in the face of the declared American policy of world free trade." (*N. Y. Times*, May 30) If Hull's post-war formula is thus threatened, so is Wallace's, since Britain's exploitation of her colonies must be increased to make up for the loss of so much other imperial revenue. This is, of course, the explanation for Churchill's "obstinacy" about India. Whether the Anglo-American bloc will show political as well as economic fissures is too early to tell. But most observers seem to agree that some kind of collectivism is much closer in England than it is here.

2) If the Stalin regime and the Red Army come out of the war sufficiently intact to play a major role in the peace settlement, the Kremlin would have two possible policies open to it. It could collaborate with the democracies in policing the post-war world, as expressed in the treaty signed last summer with Britain, which we may be sure will be adhered to faithfully by each side just so long as it seems advantageous to do so. Or Stalin could attempt an independent course, using the Red Army and the various European Communist movements to pick up the pieces after the downfall of Hitler. The first course would be advantageous only so long as he could trust his democratic partners; and it would offer great economic dangers and difficulties on either side. The second would not be open to either objection, and it would furthermore bring the backward — and war-wrecked — Russian economy into contact with industrialized Europe for the first time since 1917. But it would also be much riskier, and in fact only possible to the extent that the Red Army retains its strength. Whichever course Russia follows, it will not exactly tend to implement the Atlantic Charter.²⁾

2) And yet, such are the paradoxical twists in this period, when the dialectical principle of the unity-of-opposites is daily illustrated, the Soviet Union may turn out to be the one power that tries seriously to realize the Charter's promises on national sovereignty. Stalin's speech of November 7 last indicates a possible third post-war policy: neither collaboration with the Anglo-American forces in policing the defeated Axis, nor an attempt to spread pro-Soviet "people's governments" throughout Europe, but rather a policy of restoring the sovereignty of all pre-war nations, those of the Axis included, as a counter-balance to a too complete Anglo-American victory. "It is not our aim to destroy Germany," he states, "for it is impossible to destroy Germany, just as it is impossible to destroy Russia, but the Hitlerite state can and should be destroyed . . . It is not our aim to destroy all military force in Germany . . . but Hitler's Army can and should be destroyed." Earlier in the speech he emphasized as the alleged war aims of the Anglo-American-Soviet coalition "equality of nations and integrity of their territories . . . restoration of sovereign rights, the right of every nation to arrange its affairs as it wishes". Thus Stalin emerges as the most conservative of all post-war planners, a veritable Metternich of our age, whose respect for the status quo is so enormous as to make him oppose even a disarming of post-war Germany.

3) The best hope of any progressive social change coming out of this war seems at present to lie in Nazi-conquered Europe. By wiping out the property base of the old bourgeoisie and by treating the Continent as a unit (to be exploited for the benefit for the Reich, of course, in semi-colonial fashion) the Nazis have brought about at long last the economic unification of Europe. At the same time the brutal imposition of the Germans as a master-race has caused the subjugated populations to forget for the moment the old internal class antagonisms (whose social and economic bases are being rapidly eroded by the German occupation anyway) and unite in hatred of the national oppressors. When the Nazi yoke is shattered, almost anything may happen on the Continent. The Anglo-American bloc, especially if its armies are actually on the spot, may be able to set up "friendly" bourgeois-democratic regimes. A rash of "people's governments" may break out, engineered by the local Communist movements and looking to Moscow for support. Or independent revolutionary regimes may arise, based on a combination of workers and petty bourgeoisie, with collectivized property and egalitarian social philosophies. National independence will be the rallying-cry of such movements, which may be expected to bring them into conflict with whichever of the two imperialisms, Red or Democratic, attempt to integrate the Continent into its "Grossraumwirtschaft" — or possibly with the cooperating "police forces" of both. If there still exists a democratic revolutionary alternative to the world pattern into which the new imperialism is rapidly cooling and hardening, it is in this theatre that it will probably first manifest itself.

Dwight Macdonald

A HISTORICAL VIEW OF GEOPOLITICS

Andreas Dorpalen, *The World of General Haushofer*. Geopolitics in Action — with an introduction by Colonel Herman Beukema, U. S. A., Farrar & Rinehart, Inc., New York, 1942, xxi and 337 pp., \$3.50

Derwent Whittlesey, *German Strategy of World Conquest*. With the collaboration of C. C. Colby and R. Hartshorne and a Foreword by E. J. Coil, members of the National Planning Association, Farrar & Rinehart, Inc., New York, xiii and 293 pp., \$2.50.

Hans W. Weigert, *Generals and Geographers*. The Twilight of Geopolitics, Oxford University Press, New York, 1942, x and 273 pp., \$3.00.

Halford J. MacKinder, *Democratic Ideals and Reality*. A Study in the Politics of Reconstruction, 1919,— reissued with an Introduction by E. M. Earle and a Foreword by Major George Fielding Eliot, Henry Holt and Company, New York, 1942, xxvi and 219 pp., \$2.50.

Ever since the summer of 1941 when the "Thousand Scientists Behind Hitler" were first introduced to the American public by *The Reader's Digest*, the new science allegedly invented by Major General Prof. Dr. Karl Haushofer in Munich has been the subject of mixed emotions for the good people of America. Like most other things associated with Nazism it was admired and hated, imitated and rejected all in one breath. Even those few military specialists for whom Geopolitics had no novelty and no mystery, because they had known and practiced it themselves for a long time, felt obliged to repeat certain standard phrases which became imperative for all writing on *Geopolitik* after Pearl Harbor. Thus we find such a long-time admirer of Haushofer's theories as Colonel Beukema referring to German *Geopolitik* at one time as an undoubtedly scientific work "which must not be confused with propaganda" (*Fortune*, Jan. '42), at another time as "a curious medley of unscientific jargon, irrefutable facts, and plain hokum." (Introduction to Dorpalen, p. XVI).

THE STATUS OF GEOPOLITIK IN THE U. S.

Until recently the discussion of the theories of *Geopolitik* has been based on a deplorable ignorance of their real contents. With the exception of part of the work of Ratzel, none of the great source books of geopolitics has been translated, not even the works of Haushofer nor those of his forerunner who founded and named the new science during the first World War: the Swedish scholar Rudolf Kjellén.

On the other hand, almost all contributions to the subject in any language have been carefully translated and exploited by German scholars. They were the only ones to take an interest in even the comparatively unsuccessful efforts in this direction made by Brooks Adams in the U. S. They studied the magnificent work of the British geographer Sir MacKinder, which has been completely overlooked for more than twenty years by the English-speaking people.

The new and daring concepts advanced in the post-war period by Haushofer and his school were eagerly discussed from every conceivable point of view, including the various shades of the Marxist creed. The disciple of Kautsky, G. E. Graf, bewailed the fact that the primary importance of such nature-given factors as climate, population and the geographical formation of the earth had been neglected by Marx and all his followers, with the possible exception of Engels; he attempted to make up for this deficiency by a "synthesis" of geography and political economy — Ratzel and Marx. On the other hand, the distinguished Sinologist K. A. Wittfogel subjected the whole complex of "Geopolitics, Geographical Materialism, and Marxism" to a critical analysis that appeared both in the German and the Russian editions of the periodical *Unter dem Banner des Marxismus*. The school of Haushofer, while reprinting the greater part of Wittfogel's article in its own periodical, took the edge off his theoretical attack by a shrewd reference to the wholesale acceptance of the geopolitical principles by the practical statesmen of Soviet Russia (*Zeitschrift fuer Geopolitik*, vol. IX, p. 587).

The lack of a documentary basis for the discussion of geopolitics in the U.S. has been amended to a certain extent, but not wholly removed, by the four books listed above. Of these, the first, by Andreas Dorpalen, can be described as a good textbook for the classroom as well as for the general reading public. It is well informed, lucidly written, and does not go beyond the task of presenting the ideas and theories of *Geopolitik* in the form in which they have been presented by the German geopoliticians themselves. Of particular interest, and a welcome substitute for the original works not available in this country, are the carefully selected excerpts from the writings of Haushofer, Ratzel, MacKinder, Kjellén, Obst, Lautensach, Maull, Seiffert, Billeb, Siewert, Schmoelders, Vogel, Kraemer and Schenke, which take up 144 of the 337 pages of Dorpalen's book.

Derwent Whittlesey sets himself the more comprehensive task of presenting *Geopolitik* as a current in the main stream of German thought and, at the same time, part of a gigantic, carefully designed scheme of world conquest. Yet the extension of the theme does not add to the value of the book. It does not lead to, but rather distracts from, the peculiar features which distinguish present-day geopolitics from earlier types of imperialist aggression. The author is at his best when he illustrates the general theory by a well documented analysis of certain *arcana* of the geopolitical theory and propaganda which have not been sufficiently explored by Dorpalen and other writers on the subject. Most interesting in this respect are the twenty-eight characteristic geopolitical maps attached to Chapter VII, and the author's critical discussion of the ten basic and the more than a hundred other symbols commonly used by their makers. There is, in the same chapter, an elaborate analysis of some dozens of catch-words and phrases seized upon and reiterated in the writings of the geopoliticians.

Of a different nature is the contribution of Hans W. Weigert. The publisher's blurb describes the author as "one of the German liberals who,

unable to compromise with the forces of Hitlerism, left Germany in 1938." Five years' experience in Nazi Germany has left an all too visible trace in the author's mind. Even today, he is deeply enthralled by the "genius" of Haushofer, that "political seer of the twentieth century" (pp. 12, 112). In spite of the author's vehement repudiation of the revolutionary features of *Geopolitik* as a particularly Teutonic creed, the violently subjective theories advanced in the book are still imbued with the same outlandish *Weltanschauung*. In all this he reminds one strongly of the similarly ambivalent attitude of Rauschnig who attacked not the whole theory and practice of totalitarianism, but only its particular aspect as "the revolution of nihilism".

An original contribution to the theory of geopolitics, or geography applied to politics, is contained in the timely reissue of MacKinder's masterwork of 1919. The brilliant theories and original discoveries embodied in this book and in even earlier paper, dating back to 1904, have led many enthusiastic reviewers to describe this great work as the only true and undistorted expression of the essential contents of present-day geopolitics. The work has also impressed them by its superior formal qualities, its scientific detachment, wealth of ideas, and the inescapable logic of its conclusions. One of its admirers (E. M. Earle), though aware that the book was written in 1919 with special reference to the then impending settlement with Germany, ascribes to it "the rare quality of timelessness".

This universal praise of MacKinder's book at the present moment is not wholly due to its undoubtedly great scientific discoveries. For the present-day American experts it has the additional merit that it provides them with an opportune escape from open agreement with a Teutonic creed which had become somewhat disreputable since Pearl Harbor. The belated discovery of MacKinder's theories presents a convenient disguise for what is in fact an outright acceptance of the main tenets of the German geopoliticians. There is, as far as the present writer can see, not a single writer on *Geopolitik* in this country today who does not exploit this welcome opportunity. Even the most Teutonic among the recent explorers of *Geopolitik*, H. W. Weigert, prefers to describe himself as a disciple of MacKinder rather than of Haushofer (p. IX) or, in a more daring mood, as "the disciple of MacKinder and Haushofer" (p. 258).

THE HISTORICAL APPROACH

What is at stake in the present-day discussion is not the theoretical validity of *Geopolitik* as a "timeless" science. Emphatic denial of its validity is today just as much of a propagandistic device as the equally emphatic claim against which it is directed. For the detached observer — if such a thing can be found in the present world struggle when all previously cherished ideas of a non-partisan science have been shelved "for the duration" — the whole clamor betrays, if anything, a lack of confidence in the unreinforced strength of the arguments put forth by either side. If Haushofer's theories have a particularly German bias, those of MacKinder seem to have a par-

ticularly British flavor. Both agree in classifying the Americas, together with Australia, as merely secondary zones of the total area of the world-historical development. This emphasis on the "insular" and "satellite" character of the three so-called new continents, as compared with the old Eurasian-and-Eurafrican continent, is even stronger in the British writer than it is in Haushofer who at times seems to be more interested in the big area of the Pacific and its adjoining land regions than in the more restricted German-European zones. Nor is there any greater freedom from a particular national outlook in the theoretical schemes of the American geopoliticians. What Beukema candidly admits of his own recent scheme applies to them all: they are "obviously postulated on a decisive victory for the United Nations" (Fortune, Jan. '43).

The historical approach has the further advantage that it leads away from such generalities as the concepts of a "global", a "closed", or a "shrinking" world. The global form of the earth has been generally accepted at least since Copernicus and Columbus. The "closed world" was a widely recognized phenomenon in the last decades of the nineteenth century; it played an important part in the discussion of the nature and causes of the modern "imperialistic" form of capitalist politics both before and after the first World War. Finally, every new form of communication (railways, electrical current, motorcars, radio) was invariably hailed as a decisive step towards a "shrinking" as well as a global, a closed and closely interrelated world. These theories had so little to do with present-day geopolitics that on the contrary the whole development was in most cases presented as a tendency towards an ever greater *independence* from the geographical properties of the various regions of the earth. The same Utopian idea recurs in the present-day sentiment about the alleged importance, both for global war and global peace, of the recent developments in the use of airpower. Impressive examples of this kind of generalities and half-truth are found in the beautiful airmaps and grandiloquent advertisements spread all over the country by *American Airlines, Inc.*

The real truth which is only dimly perceived by the prophets of the new "air-age geopolitics" is that all those earlier concepts have assumed a new and enhanced significance within the modern theory and practice of geopolitics. At the same time they have been integrated with a number of other ideas and realities which are today represented by the forces of totalitarianism, Fascism and Nazism as well as by those opposite tendencies which describe themselves as anti-Nazism, anti-Fascism and anti-totalitarianism.

The idea that *Geopolitik* in its present form is a particular phase of a great world-historical process has been presented, first of all, by Haushofer himself. He has always carefully distinguished between the evolutionary strategies based on sea-power, which are followed by the old empires, and the revolutionary strategies of the newcomers who tried to establish unchallenged

control over a wide continental area and to build on this enlarged basis a great combined force of land-, sea- and air-power. A striking example is the discussion of the various evolutionary and revolutionary schemes advanced by the representatives of the Pan-European, the Pan-Asiatic, the Pan-Pacific, and other Pan"-movements, contained in Haushofer's *Geopolitik der Pan-ideen* of 1931.

The same idea seems to underlie the somewhat crude theory by which certain American writers have explained *Geopolitik* as a mere dogmatic rationalization of an "axe to grind" and of the consequent "emotional efforts". The connection of this psychological explanation with a more objective historical insight appears in Whittlesey's phrase that "Geopolitics was sired by war and born by revolution" (p. 113). It appears again in the concluding chapter of his book where the author hints at the possibility that after all there may be some more important cause for the present upheaval than Germany's "ingrained habit of aggression", namely, "an economic system disintegrating under blows dealt it by a changing technology". He also speaks of a cure for the present unrest, more efficient than a mere psychological re-education, which might be found in "a suitable political framework for the technological age" (pp. 261, 268).

The nearest approach to a genuine historical interpretation is made by Weigert who describes *Geopolitik* as the philosophy of "that deadly fight for world domination, that represents the world-revolution of our age" (p. 252). Yet the historical view of the author is obstructed by the fact that he does not break through those particular ideological barriers within which the German geopoliticians have moved from the very outset. He may exert himself in a frantic attempt to turn Haushofer's theories against Haushofer himself. He may strive to offer to the Americans a new "Heartland" and a new "World Island" based on the recently discovered potentialities which, according to Vilhjalmar Stefansson (*Fortune*, July, '42), are inherent in the great new continent formed by the regions surrounding that new Mediterranean — the Arctic Ocean. But all this amounts in the end to nothing more than an imitation of the scheme which has been worked out on a comparatively more realistic basis by Haushofer and his disciples in Nazi Germany. In striking contrast to the realism of the original model, the new version of a geopolitical program starts from an altogether ideological assumption. The decisive importance of the new World Island (the land-masses of North America, Asiatic Russia, and China) is said to lie not in the "tangibles of power assembled in the inland regions" but in the "intangibles" which will "mold the future of man" and which are alleged to be "nowhere more at work than in the continental land-masses" (p. 255).

There is a twofold fallacy underlying the objections raised by Weigert and other critics against the "materialist philosophy" which is supposed to be inherent in the new science of the German geopoliticians. First, one should not turn up his nose at a materialist approach in a field in which, since time immemorial, all true experts have been imbued with more than

a moderate dose of materialism. Second, the geographical materialism of Haushofer is not a "materialistic" creed in the sense in which the term is used by the critics. It is not a passive, deterministic and fatalistic belief in the irrelevancy of the organized will of man. In spite of the tremendous difference which—as will be shown later—exists between the two conceptions, the new materialism of the geopoliticians is just as critical, activist and, in the traditional sense, idealistic as was, in an earlier period, the so-called historical materialism of Marx. The hotly contested distinction between *political geography* and *geopolitics* is of exactly the same order as that which in the nineteenth century existed between the *political economy* of Quesnay, Smith and Ricardo, and the *critique of political economy* of Marx.

Just as Marxism aimed at a conscious control of the economic life of society, so Haushoferism today can be described as an attempt at the political control of space. This character of the new materialism appears most clearly in the following formulation which we select from the one hundred and more "definitions" of *Geopolitik* discussed in the current literature. According to O. Schaefer, as quoted by Whittlesey, p. 80:

"Political geography is directed toward the past, geopolitics toward the present. Political geography shows how space influences the state, imposes its laws upon the state and so to speak overwhelms it. Geopolitics considers how the state overcomes the conditions and laws of space and makes them serve its purposes. The former places more emphasis upon the simple presentation of the qualities of space. The latter is interested in space requirements, with the outspoken aim of finding norms for the behavior of the state in ever increasing space. To sum up, political geography views the state from the standpoint of space; geopolitics views space from the standpoint of the state."

FROM MacKINDER TO HAUSHOFER

We shall not embark here upon a detailed analysis of that gigantic and not yet concluded historical process by which in our time the old form of imperialism, based on sea-power, is transformed into a new imperialism, no longer primarily based on sea-power but on control of the big continental areas of the world. Nor shall we try to describe the forms in which sea-trade and sea-power had a decisive share in the genesis of the whole economic, political and ideological structure of that older type of bourgeois society which prevailed to the end of the nineteenth century, nor to show why the domination of large and contiguous ("continental") areas has become one of the basic foundation of the new monopolist and imperialist structure of capitalist society. Instead, we take our departure from the often observed contrast between the form in which *Geopolitik* was presented by Haushofer roughly from 1920 to 1940 and the form in which it had been presented by MacKinder during the preceding two decades, that is, in the period overshadowed by the first World War. We shall try to discover the historical basis for the daring anticipations of future development found in

MacKinder's work of 1919 and which appeared, even more miraculously, in his earlier paper, *The Geographical Pivot of History*, read before the Royal Geographical Society in London in 1904 and now reprinted by Dorpalen, pp. 185—201.

How did it happen that at this particular time, after many centuries of comparative self-assurance, a British scholar, equipped with an all-comprehensive geographical knowledge and endowed with a particular historical sensitivity, became aware of the tremendous contradictions between the survival of his own British empire and the new potentialities inherent in the material formation of the inhabited earth? Like Ricardo in the early 19th Century, this political geographer of the early 20th Century no longer shared the naive faith of his contemporaries in a preestablished harmony of the then-existing economic and political structure of the world. Like Ricardo again, he lived at a time when the secret tremors under the surface of the then-existing world system had just come to the open in the outbreak of a world-wide economic crisis in the one case and of a world war in the other. Yet in each instance, that first menace had been safely overcome and the threat of a new and greater danger was as yet but dimly perceivable in the distant horizon. This explains the almost super-worldly quality of serene detachment for which both these writers were admired by the best among their contemporaries and by subsequent generations. "Mr. Ricardo", said Lord Brougham, "seemed to have dropped from another planet." The same strange feeling fills those who today, after reading MacKinder's book, reflect on the immature historical conditions in which those daring discoveries were made, and on the tremendous isolation of the man who made them.

The whole situation had changed in the new period in which Haushofer turned MacKinder's theories against MacKinder's world. In the meantime the entire traditional system of society had been shaken in its foundation by the first waves of a world-wide social and political revolution and the conquest of state power by the representatives of a formerly suppressed class. The impact of this experience was not weakened by the fact that the revolution was arrested and frustrated. The manifold broken and distorted forms in which the revolutionary forces reemerged after a short respite finally destroyed the faith of the ruling class, and of all classes, in the security of the existing economic, political and ideological structure of society. The defeated revolution returned in the more terrifying and brutalizing forms of a totally disenchanted, cynical and ruthless counter-revolution.

From this historical source derives the glaring contrast between the scientific detachment of the geopolitical writings of MacKinder and the impassioned and strangely perverted yet terribly efficient theories of Haushofer and his disciples. Geopolitik represents the expression as well as the weapon of a desperate attempt to solve the revolutionary problems of our times in a different way—through the cataclysm of a world-wide counter-revolution.

A further difference between MacKinder and Haushofer arises from the fact that MacKinder's thought, in spite of a critical awareness of the

impending changes, still corresponded to a structure of society based on trade and on the production of commodities. As such it was still bound to the characteristic fiction of competitive capitalism by which each producer in seeking his private gain is assumed to serve, at the same time, a more general end. What is good for one member of the bourgeois "community" should be good for all. This principle was supposed to apply to scientific theories and political programs as well as to the production and exchange of material goods. Even the imperialist conquest and exploitation of colonial territories and zones of interest was deemed to promote, in the last instance, the progress of the exploited peoples as well as of the exploiters. Thus in the eyes of MacKinder, and in those of his belated eulogists today, there is no contradiction but rather a profound harmony between the fact that his theory served the ends of the British Empire and the assumption that it served the true interests of the whole earth. In contrast, the repetition of MacKinder's theories by Haushofer at the present time serves nothing but an insatiable lust for aggrandizement and conquest. The real difference is, of course, that the new imperialism of monopoly capitalism as represented by the totalitarian forces, is no longer formally bound to the traditional obligation of the bourgeois class to represent its group interests as the general interests of humanity — though it still indulges occasionally in the now entirely hypocritical use of the old ideological language.

There is no sense then in explaining the difference between MacKinder and Haushofer in psychological, ethical, or ethnical terms as the difference between true and pseudo-science, a gentleman and a knave, or a Britisher and a Teuton. Nor is it helpful to refer to Haushofer's use of MacKinder's texts as a case of "the devil quoting scripture".

When Haushofer reviewed MacKinder's book in the second volume of *Zeitschrift fuer Geopolitik* in 1925, he was fully aware of the ambiguities of MacKinder's position. He advised his readers to make good use of this highly valuable work which is "poison", he said, for "good peace-loving Europeans but wholesome for empire builders" — a work of lasting importance for those who know how to think in the great coherent schemes of geopolitical thought and to travel the unbeaten paths of *Geopolitik*. He showed that, through the very contradiction of his standpoint, the British geographer had become the most logical geopolitical educator in a course of continental politics which must be followed by the land powers of the old world unless they want to remain forever the victims of foreign exploitation. There is still another reason, he added, which makes MacKinder's theories valuable for the German reader. They should not be regarded only as a lesson that can be learned from a "hateful enemy". It is even doubtful whether in the coming fight between democracy and totalitarian statesmanship this Britisher is to be regarded as an enemy at all. "*MacKinder*", he said, *combines polite bows to the democratic ideas with a devastating criticism of the democratic practice*".

Such duplicity of purpose seems indeed to be expressed in the very title of MacKinder's book which confronts "Democratic Ideals" with "Real-